SAXIFRAGA TEXANA (SAXIFRAGACEAE) NEW TO LOUISIANA

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ABSTRACT

Saxifraga texana (Saxifragaceae) is reported as new to Louisiana. It was discovered in a saline prairie in De Soto Parish, relatively close to similar prairies in Arkansas and Texas where the species is known.

RESUMEN

Se cita como nueva para Louisiana *Saxifraga texana* (Saxifragaceae). Se descubrió en una pradera salina en De Soto Parish, relativamente cerca de praderas similares Arkansas y Texas de donde se conocía la especie.

In a recent search of Louisiana saline prairies for *Geocarpon minimum* Mackenzie, we discovered a population of approximately 100 plants of *Saxifraga texana* Buckl. in a De Soto Parish prairie (northwest Louisiana). The plants were scattered over about one hectare of a saline prairie complex that totals 10.9 hectares. We did not locate any additional *S. texana* populations in the course of surveys of other saline prairies.

Saxifraga texana is known from Arkansas, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas, but it has not been reported for Louisiana (MacRoberts 1989; Thomas & Allen 1998; Kartesz & Meacham 2005; USDA, NRCS 2007). We were aware of the possibility of encountering *Saxifraga texana* during our *Geocarpon* surveys since it occurs on saline prairies in south Arkansas and east Texas (Jason Singhurst, unpublished data; Theo Witsell, voucher specimen: *Witsell 03-29*, Bradley County, Warren Prairie Natural Area, Herbarium of the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission).

These globally imperiled (G1G2) plant communities are primarily limited to the West Gulf Coastal Plain (McInnis et al. 1993; Keith et al. 2004; Lester et al. 2005; MacRoberts & MacRoberts 2007). Saline prairies are grassy openings with a relatively short grass canopy and usually contain scattered treed pimple (mima) mounds. They occur on high-sodium soils (Bonn silt loam) on lower landscape positions usually in close proximity to drainages. Saline prairies may be better described as barrens since they are edaphically maintained. Fire may have been a process historically but apparently is not required for maintenance. Small depressions are common in the northwest Louisiana prairies and add to the plant diversity by supporting species with wetter site affinities. Characteristic species in these prairies in northwestern Louisiana include: *Agrostis elliottiana*, *Anagallis minima*, *Aristida longespica*, *Aristida oligantha*, *Astragalus distortus*, *Coreopsis tinctoria*, *Crassula aquatica*, *Eragrostis lugens*, *Evolvulus sericeus*, *Fimbristylis puberula*, *Geocarpon minimum*, *Gratiola flava*, *Hordeum pusillum*, *Houstonia micrantha*, *Houstonia pusilla*, *Houstonia rosea*, *Hypericum drummondii*, *Iva angustifolia*, *Isolepis carinata*, *Krigia occidentalis*, *Minuartia drummondii*, *Minuatria muscorum*, *Neptunia lutea*, *Oenothera linifolia*, *Opuntia humifusa*, *Phalaris caroliniana*, *Plantago pusilla*, *Rhynchospora harveyi*, *Ruellia humilis*, *Rumex hastatulus*, *Sabatia campestris*, *Sporobolus pyramidatus, Sporobolis vaginiflorus*, *Talinum parviflorum*, *Tradescantia occidentalis*, and *Tridens strictus*. In a future publication we will describe saline prairies more fully.

Voucher specimen: **LOUISIANA. De Soto Parish**: Dickson Prairie, ca 2 air mi NE of Stonewall, NW1/4 S9 T15N R14W, lat/long: 321827N, 934824W, locally abundant in saline prairie, *Aristida–Sporobolus* zone, 7 Mar 2007, *Reid 6001, with Faulkner, MacRoberts & MacRoberts* (LSU, NO).

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